

# HANDBOOK

FOR THE USE OF

## Alberta Women's Institutes



Printed under the direction of the  
Council of Alberta Women's  
Institutes

1949



# HANDBOOK

FOR THE USE OF

## Alberta Women's Institutes



Printed under the direction of the  
Council of Alberta Women's  
Institutes

1949

# Alberta Women's Institutes Handbook

●

**T**HIS booklet is presented to the Women's Institute of Alberta as a guide in organizing new branches and in carrying on their work in a business-like and effective manner. Grateful acknowledgement is made to the Ontario Women's Institute Handbook, to Miss Mary MacIsaac who wrote the first Women's Institute Handbook for Alberta, and to Mrs. L. M. Parsons from whose Manual extracts have been taken and to the handbook, "The Conduct of a Meeting", by Firby, to which you are referred for fuller particulars.

The object of publishing this booklet is to help those who are far removed from sources of information and to offer suggestions which will help the wheels to run smoothly. It is greatly to be hoped that never, under any circumstances, will it be used as a means of stirring up strife or controversy.

# CONTENTS



Foreword .....	2
Origin .....	4
Aims and Objects .....	4
How to Form a Women's Institute .....	5
Election of Officers .....	5
Duties of Officers—	
President .....	9
Vice-President .....	10
Secretary .....	10
Treasurer .....	11
Directors .....	12
Auditors .....	12
Constituency Representatives .....	12
Meetings—	
Regular .....	13
Quorum .....	14
Committees .....	15
Finances and Membership .....	17
Rules for Conducting a Meeting .....	18
Motions .....	19
Amendments .....	20
By-Laws .....	21
Constituency Organization and By-Laws .....	22
Constituency Finance .....	24
District Organization .....	25
Constitution and By-Laws .....	26

## ORIGIN

"The first Women's Institute was organized in Saltfleet Township, Wentworth County, Ontario, on the 19th of February, 1897, with a view of meeting the expressed desire to acquire information which would insure greater efficiency on the part of the women in the rural sections in those varied responsibilities resting upon them in the home, and as citizens. The original branch is now known as the Stony Creek Women's Institute."

Since that time the movement has spread throughout Canada, overseas to Great Britain, to the Continent, to South Africa and even to India, and to Australia and New Zealand.

## AIMS AND OBJECTS

"The object of the Alberta Women's Institutes is to unite the interest and enterprise of Alberta women to promote betterment in educational, social, moral and civic conditions and to compare methods of work.

"All Institutes shall be strictly non-political and non-sectarian in every phase of their work, and no Institute shall be operated in the interest of any person, party or sect, but for the equal good of all citizens."

No addresses or discussions in the interest of any society or organization formed for any special purpose shall be permitted at any meeting of any Institute or at any Institute convention, except by the unanimous consent of the meeting.

The Alberta Women's Institutes have united women in country, town and city in many efforts for the betterment of home and country. The first Alberta resolution concerning medical inspection of schools was the Women's Institute resolution. It was in response to the request of a Women's Institute president that the first travelling clinic was sent out in the province of Alberta. The Women's Institutes of Alberta have been instrumental in establishing and furthering welfare work, health education, community halls, organized recreation; in undertaking care of cemeteries, school improvements,

beautification of home surroundings, in welcoming new settlers and in being the "Good Neighbor" in a new country.

For further details of "Aims and Objects" see the Women's Institute Act, 1929.

## **HOW TO FORM A WOMEN'S INSTITUTE**

The organizing of new branches of the Alberta Women's Institutes is left largely to the Constituency Conveners, or the Directors. However any group of eight or more women may organize a Women's Institute if they wish to do so. Application forms for the organization of branch Women's Institutes may be obtained from the Provincial Secretary A.W.I., and when filled in as outlined thereon must be returned to the Provincial President for approval.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

### **Chairman pro tem and Secretary pro tem**

After the meeting has been called to order two officers must be chosen, one a chairman for the time being (a chairman pro tem) to preside over the meeting; the other, a secretary for the time being (a secretary pro tem) to keep a record of what the meeting does.

Any person may call the meeting to order. Someone rises and moves that Mrs.——be made temporary chairman. Someone else will second the motion, and the mover may then put the motion to the meeting by saying "It has been moved and seconded that Mrs.——be chairman of this meeting. All those in favor please signify by saying aye (or raising the right hand)." Then she asks "Contrary?" and takes note of the result. The choosing of a chairman for this meeting should not be left to haphazard chance but someone should have been approached before the meeting so that she will be somewhat prepared to take the chair. Usually the Constituency Convener acts as chairman but this is not necessary.

When the chairman has assumed charge of the meeting she may state why the meeting was called or she may ask some one else who



is especially interested in the work to do so, or the question may be introduced by reading the "Aims and Objects of Women's Institutes" in this booklet, or from the Women's Institute Act, 1929.

After the question of forming a branch of the Alberta Women's Institute has been thoroughly discussed and its aims and objects thoroughly understood it is in order for someone to rise and say, "I move that a branch of the Alberta Women's Institutes be formed at ———." Someone else will rise and say "Madam Chairman, I second the motion." The Chairman asks "Is there any further discussion?" When all have had ample opportunity to express their views the Chairman asks "Are you ready for the question?" All those who feel ready to vote on the question say "Question," and the motion is put in the ordinary way.

### **CHARTER MEMBERS**

**(i.e., Members who join at the Organization Meeting)**

The Secretary then take the names of those who wish to become members. Any woman or girl over sixteen years of age may become a member of an Institute upon payment of the membership fee which shall entitle her to membership during the Institute year for which it is paid. The application form (which has already been obtained from the Provincial Secretary of Alberta Women's Institutes) must be signed by eight or more women residents in the community to be served and who have paid a fee of at least 25 cents. This application shall then be forwarded to the Provincial President of Alberta Women's Institutes for her approval.

The organization should be completed at this meeting by the election of permanent officers, subject to the approval of the application by the Provincial President; or a second meeting may be called for this purpose after the application has been approved.

The executive officers shall include a



president, one vice-president, a secretary-treasurer or a secretary and a treasurer and at least three directors (one additional director shall be elected for every ten members in excess of thirty [30]).

These shall constitute the executive (in the W.I. Act, the executive is referred to as the Directors.) Each Branch should appoint two auditors and a Constituency Representative.

Officers shall be elected by ballot and a majority of votes shall elect

The first office to be filled is that of president. "Nominations for the office of president are now in order," says the chairman. A member rises and after addressing the chair, says "I nominate Mrs. Brown for president" (Mrs. Brown being the present chairman pro tem). Another member nominates someone else. If there do not appear to be any more nominations the chairman then says "Are there any other nominations?" (She waits a moment.) "If not, nominations are closed," or a member may move that nominations close.

### **PROCEDURE WHEN CHAIRMAN IS NOMINATED FOR OFFICE**

The chairman may not like to preside over her own election, so may ask some other member to take the chair and conduct the election. She, herself, vacates the chair. Her substitute as chairman pro tem appoints scrutineers and asks them to distribute the ballots. When the scrutineers collect the ballots, the chair says "Have all voted who desire to do so? If they have, the polls are closed." The scrutineers retire to count the ballots and someone moves to take recess till the scrutineers report the result of the counting. The chairman of the scrutineers when they are ready to report, hands their report in writing to the presiding officer who calls the Institute to order and announces the vote according to the facts in the following form: "Number of votes cast 30; number necessary to elect 16; Mrs. A. received 20, Mrs. B. 10. Mrs. A. having re-

ceived a majority of all votes cast is duly elected president of this Women's Institute."

This means that to be elected on the first count the winner must have received one-half of the total votes polled, plus one.

The ensuing officers are elected in the same manner: Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, or Secretary-Treasurer.

### **WHEN A VOTE FAILS TO GIVE A MAJORITY**

No one having received a majority vote, there is no election and the scrutineers have the ballots prepared again. One of the nominees, Mrs. Y. perhaps, says she will withdraw with the consent of the person who nominated her. Then two candidates remain and unless there should be a tie, one of them should get a majority of votes. The scrutineers report the result of the vote to the chairman who announces the number of votes cast and the name of the successful candidate. It is not necessary to announce the details of the last ballot unless so desired by the meeting.

It may be, however, that none of the candidates signify a desire to withdraw when the first ballot has not given any one a majority of the votes cast. There may have been any number of candidates with only one to be elected. In that case the lowest on the list is eliminated and the ballot taken again on those remaining. If necesasry a third or fourth ballot may be taken till some one obtains a clear majority of the votes cast, the lowest in each of the previous ballots being eliminated in each vote. This procedure is followed in all cases where only one person is to be elected.

### **THE TIE VOTE**

When there is an equal number of votes received by the two candidates or where there is an equal number of votes for or against a motion this is called a "tie" and the presiding officer must cast a ballot to break the "tie". Her vote is called a "casting vote".

In the event of an officer of an Institute

dying or resigning office or otherwise vacating the same during the period for which she was elected, the executive shall appoint an eligible person to fill the office for the unexpired term.

## DUTIES OF OFFICERS

### President

The president shall preside at all meetings of the Institute as well as at meetings of the executive.

She should stand when addressing the members and when putting a question to the meeting. She may sit while recognizing a member and must remain seated while a question is being discussed. She may vote when by ballot or in the event of a "tie." In all ordinary questions she has no vote.

The president while in the chair should take no part in the debate, nor in the discussion of the question pending. Frequently, however, she may be in possession of information which would be of use to the members in coming to a decision. With the permission of the meeting she may give such information but not in a controversial way.

She should read, or cause to be read, each motion as it is introduced and should then ask (after it has been duly moved and seconded), "Is there any discussion?" Before proceeding to the vote she should read the motion again and then ask, "Are you ready for the question?" She then says: "All in favor of the motion will signify by saying 'Aye'." The vote is counted. She proceeds, "Those opposed will signify by saying 'No'." The vote is counted. Her decision on the result should be announced clearly and decisively. It is most important that the president speak clearly and say exactly what she means on all occasions. A vote may be taken by raising the right hand if so desired.

The president should be a woman of good sense, impartial, dignified, tactful, courteous, business-like, patient, with a sense of humor and a considerable knowledge of parliamentary usage. She must keep order. To do this she

must keep down all purposeless talk, insist that personalities be avoided, and that the debate be relevant to the subject, always remembering that she is the chairman, not the "boss." It is permissible for her, though rarely advisable, to call the vice-president or in her absence, some other member to the chair and herself take part in the debate or discussion. Her personal opinion or desire should rarely be felt by the members.

The chairman is addressed as "Madam Chairman." The president is ex officio (by virtue of her office) a member of all committees.

After the secretary has read the minutes the president usually says "You have heard the minutes. Are there any corrections or amendments?" If there are not she says "I declare the minutes approved as read." If there are any such, the secretary makes the required alterations and the president then says "I declare the minutes approved as corrected and amended." Generally the president at once signs the minutes though this is not absolutely necessary. The minutes are signed by the Secretary. It is not necessary to have a motion to adopt minutes.

### **Vice-President**

The Vice-President takes the chair, in the absence of the president, and all that applies to the president's duties shall apply equally to her.

### **The Secretary**

The secretary shall attend all meetings of the Institute and all executive meetings. She shall keep a record of the proceedings (called minutes) in a book furnished for that purpose. These books shall be carefully kept as the years go by in order that a history of the Institute may be available. She should keep a list of members. Within 3 days after the regular meeting she shall report to the Provincial President, the Constituency Convener and the Publicity Convener on the forms provided. She shall send in annual reports on forms provided.

She should bring all correspondence before the Institute unless there is a rule empowering the Executive to deal with it.

The Secretary should keep copies of all important letters which she writes and should also keep all important letters she receives. It would be well to file letters in an orderly manner. Large envelopes made of strong brown paper could be made for each feature of work and labelled accordingly.

She shall keep a book containing the rules of order, by-laws and constitution of the Institute for ready reference.

She shall prepare for the President a memorandum (or agenda) setting forth the order of business for the meeting.

The Secretary shall stand while reading the minutes and correspondence and while calling the roll.

The Secretary may move or second a motion, take part in discussion and has all the rights of any other member.

She shall prepare an annual report of the Institute for the annual meeting, and a report to be read at the Constituency Conference.

She shall hand over to her successor all books, papers and records pertaining to her office within ten days after the election of her successor.

### **The Treasurer**

The Treasurer takes charge of all monies of the Institute. She collects the membership fees and keeps a record of members and provides the Secretary with a duplicate list. She presents a financial statement at each regular meeting, and renders an annual report which has been previously audited by the person or persons appointed by the Institute. She should bank all monies and where possible should pay by cheque. Frequently the signature of the President as well as of the Treasurer is signed to a cheque but this is a matter for the Institute to decide. The bank account of the Treasurer should be in the name of the Institute. She must never mix the funds of the Institute with her personal account. If the

two are kept separate all difficulties will be avoided and the account kept perfectly straight.

Within ten days after the election of her successor she shall hand over all books, monies and documents pertaining to her office to the new Treasurer.

### **Directors**

The directors are elected to act as an advisory council or management committee of the Institute, and are expected to assist the other officers in planning and carrying on the work of the Institute. It is well to have a director on each committee. The directors should take it upon themselves to solicit membership and to suggest ways and means whereby the work of the Institute may be made more effective. It is usually from the directors that future officers are chosen. In some Institutes directors are asked to be responsible for nine other members (the names of these being furnished by the Secretary), to see that they are reminded of the meetings, to report any illness among them, etc.

### **Auditors**

The auditors may be members or may be some outside persons who may be appointed to audit the books of the Treasurer. This is work that must be done very carefully and thoroughly. The auditors should see that the balance carried forward from the preceding year corresponds with the records as contained in the financial statement of the year before. The receipts for membership should correspond with the record of members found in the minute book. All expenditures must be vouched for by receipt and books must balance perfectly.

### **Constituency Representatives**

The Constituency Representative shall be a member of the Constituency Committee. She shall attend the Constituency Conference and read the branch report prepared by the Branch Secretary and she shall also bring

back a report of the conference unless it is the wish of the branch to elect another member as their official delegate, who would perform the above duties.

## MEETINGS

Regular meetings should be held at a definite time and place which is made known to all the members.

X At least four regular meetings must be held during the year, at which papers shall be read, addresses delivered or discussions held dealing with topics in harmony with the aims and objectives of Women's Institutes. It is usual for Institutes to hold monthly meetings.

Special meetings may be called by the President or Secretary or at the request of the Board of Directors, and due notice shall be given the members. It must be kept in mind that no business can be transacted at a special meeting except that for which the meeting is specifically called.

## ORDER OF REGULAR MEETINGS

Opening exercises.

Roll call.

Reading of Minutes.

Approval of minutes by audience and signing of minutes by President.

Reports of Committees.

Business arising out of minutes and reports of committees.

Correspondence and business arising out of same.

New business.

Regular programme.

Adjournment.

## ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting (other than the organization meetings, which is called the first annual meeting) shall be held in December



of each year at such time and place as the directors may appoint. At least two weeks' notice of this meeting shall be given in writing and posted or delivered personally to the members.

In case of failure to hold the annual meeting in December, the Provincial President may appoint a time for holding it and the branch secretary shall notify the members as specified above.

Should a branch have reason to hold the annual meeting earlier than December, permission to do so may be obtained from the Provincial President. The officers then elected should assume their duties at the regular time in December.

### **ORDER OF ANNUAL MEETING**

Opening exercises.

Roll call.

Reading of minutes of last annual meeting and last regular meeting.

President's address and discussion thereon.

Secretary's report and discussion.

Report of committees.

Auditor's report.

Discussion of reports.

Business arising out of minutes or reports.

Election of officers.

New Business.

Regular programme.

Adjournment.

Every effort should be made to have a large attendance at the regular meeting. A short, particularly attractive programme may help.

### **QUORUM**

A quorum is the least number of members who are permitted to transact business.

20% of the paid-up members shall form a quorum for a regular meeting but there should be a minimum attendance of four paid-up members.

40% of the paid-up members shall form a quorum at a special meeting, with a minimum attendance of five paid-up members.

Three shall constitute a quorum of a meeting of the executive of an Institute.

A majority of a committee constitutes a quorum and for that reason it is recommended that large numbers on a committee should be avoided.

## **COMMITTEES**

Committees may be elected at a meeting of the Institute; by the Executive; or appointed by the Chair. The Chair has the right to appoint a committee only after a motion to that effect has been passed at a regular or special meeting of the members, or by the Executive.

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

Standing Committees are permanent committees for the year. Special and temporary committees are chosen to take charge of special work. Usually one of the directors is on each committee.

The President of the branch Institute is an ex officio member of all committees.

When special committees are appointed it should be clearly indicated (1) whether or not it may add to its numbers; (2) whether or not it may take action or must report back to the Institute or to the Executive before doing so.

A committee may not undertake financial responsibility unless it is given such power by the Executive. If its work involves expenditure it must first submit to the Executive an estimate of probable expenditure.

The gross proceeds from entertainments or other undertaking in charge of a committee, together with all bills, should be handed over to the treasurer of the Institute for settlement. The Treasurer should take the money, pay all bills, getting receipts for same and give a full written report of receipts and ex-

penditures which report should be dated and filed for reference.

The business of the committee should be conducted in the same way as that of a large body. If a permanent convener is not named at the time of the appointment of the committee, the first one named on the committee shall be the temporary convener. The business of the convener is to obtain a list of the members of the committee, appoint a place, set a time and make the preliminary arrangements for a meeting. The majority of the members of a committee constitute a quorum.

The convener should first call the meeting to order and ask for nominations for a secretary. After the election of the secretary, the chairman, if temporary, may be made permanent, or another may be elected. The committee may then proceed to the business for which it was appointed. It is the duty of the convener or the secretary of the committee to read the report. When a committee presents a report there are three ways of dealing with it:

(a) **THAT IT BE ADOPTED.** When a report is adopted the way is clear for any further motions that may be necessary to put it into effect. The convener of the committee which brings in the report usually moves its adoption. A brief reference to the report should be made in the minutes and the report filed with the secretary.

(b) **THAT IT BE RECEIVED AND FILED.** This means that no action is to be taken regarding the matter in question.

(c) **THAT THE REPORT** be referred back to the committee for further consideration.

(d) **THAT IT BE TABLED.** This means that it is shelved unless there is a motion to "take it off the table" at a subsequent meeting.

## **PROGRESS REPORT**

Committees may make a progress report to the Institute to tell how the work for which they were appointed is getting on. This report may be approved or otherwise by the meeting.

## FINANCES AND MEMBERSHIP

The membership fee must be at least 25 cents per member but may be larger if so desired by the Institute. This fee should be paid at the annual meeting or as early in the new year as possible. It is the duty of the Treasurer to see that these fees are asked for in a tactful and gracious manner.

Institutes may raise money in any way agreed upon by the members.

X Institutes must guard against being used as collecting agencies for other organizations.

The funds of an Institute shall be expended in paying their annual Provincial and Constituency dues and such other obligations as they have incurred in connection with the organization; in paying expenses of delegates to conferences and conventions, postage and stationery and in such other ways as are thought to be advisable by the officers and members of the Institute bearing in mind always that whatever expenditure is made must be of such a nature that all the members will have equal privileges in participation in the benefits accruing therefrom. The Institute is a non-sectarian organization so money can not be given to any church. The members will support their churches through their church societies. However, where church premises are used for meetings, etc., it is quite in order to subscribe funds in payment thereof or as a token of appreciation for the accommodation.

If it is thought well to make donations to local charities or public improvements the Institute should be careful not to assume responsibility that rightfully belongs elsewhere.

The first duty of an Institute is to support its own organization financially and otherwise; then reach out to help others.

Members may support and attend more than one Institute but shall have voting power and pay membership dues in one Institute only.

When a member moves away, she may ask the Secretary for a transfer to another Insti-

tute. This written transfer shall entitle her to full membership in the Institute to which she is transferred, for the balance of the year but her name shall remain on the roll of the first Institute as it was there she paid her fee and her name shall be counted by it when reckoning the Provincial and Constituency funds.

Only those who have paid their membership fee are members in good standing and may vote. It may be for some good reason, that women who have been members do not attend for a year and do not pay fees. These may be kept on a separate list as "Members in arrears." Such persons are not counted when reckoning Provincial and Constituency funds. When they again pay fees they become members in good standing. If after a year they do not attend and do not pay fees their names are struck off until such time as they join again and pay the fee.

The Provincial fund is reckoned on the number of paid-up members whose names have been on the roll during the year about to close, and should be paid directly after the annual meeting. The minimum fee is \$8.00.

The Constituency fund should be forwarded as soon as asked for by the Constituency Secretary-treasurer or Constituency Convener.

An Institute should be careful to meet all financial obligations as promptly as possible.

All expenditures of money should be approved by the Institute except such dues as are required by the constitution and are already approved, and petty cash for postage and stationery.

## **SOME RULES FOR CONDUCTING A MEETING**

All meeting should begin at the hour announced. If the president or the vice-president is not present, those in attendance may appoint a chairman and proceed with the programme, or such portions of it as they may think well, until the president or vice-presi-

dent arrives, when the acting chairman should retire in her favor. Business should not be transacted till there is a quorum present, although features of the day not involving business may be proceeded with.

In the absence of the secretary, the president may name some person approved by the meeting to act in her place or the meeting may be asked to elect a secretary pro tem, in the regular way.

✓ When a member wishes to speak, she rises and addresses the chair: "Madam Chairman" or "Madam President." The president calls her by name ("Miss Brown"), thus introducing her to the meeting and she is then at liberty to speak. She must not do so until recognized by the chair.

A member is not permitted to speak more than once to the same question but may ask permission to explain something said in her former statement.

### A MOTION

✓ Every important item of business should be brought before the meeting in the form of a motion. Some one rises and says, "Madam President, I move—." Another member rises and says, "Madam President, I second the motion."

f A motion should not be discussed until it is properly seconded. When any item of business or policy is brought before the meeting, some preliminary explanation may be necessary before a motion can be made but the chairman should not permit explanations or answering of questions bearing on the same to continue unduly before calling for a motion, and she must see that the members confine themselves to the motion under consideration.

When a motion has been made and seconded, the Chairman should repeat the motion with the names of the mover and seconder and then say, "You have heard the motion. It is open for discussion." Ample opportunity must be given for discussion. When all have spoken who wish to do so the chairman asks, "Are you ready for the question?" Those that

are, say "Question," (or silence gives consent), then she takes the vote. Even if the majority of those present vote for the motion she must always call for the vote of those opposed. When it is difficult to count the votes from the "ayes" and "noes" or a show of hands, a standing vote may be called for by the chairman. A majority of votes is required to carry a motion, unless otherwise provided. In the event of a tie the motion is declared lost.

## AMENDMENTS

After a motion has been moved and seconded, some one may offer an amendment, which must also be seconded. When a vote is taken, the amendment is taken first. If the amendment is lost the original motion is put. If the amendment is carried, the meeting is asked to vote on the original motion as amended.

There should be only one motion before the meeting at one time, unless it is a motion to amend.

The chairman of a meeting should not forget—

- (1) To see that every motion or amendment is properly seconded.
- (2) To read the motion or amendment to the meeting before discussion and again before voting.
- (3) To put the amendment before putting the main motion.
- (4) To call for the votes of both those in favor and opposed.
- (5) To announce the result of the vote clearly.
- (6) To put the main motion to the meeting as amended provided the amendment has already carried.

When a motion contains two or more propositions the chairman may require that it be divided in which case each proposition shall be moved, seconded, discussed and voted upon separately.

## MOTIONS WITHDRAWN

Motions may be withdrawn by the mover before being seconded.



Motions may be withdrawn after being seconded, with the consent of the seconder.

## **TO CONCLUDE DISCUSSION ON A MOTION**

If, however, the motion has been moved, seconded and stated by the president, it then requires the unanimous consent of the meeting to withdraw it.

When a member thinks it inadvisable to continue the discussion on a motion she may attempt to dispose of it by one of the following motions:

(a) That the matter be referred to a committee.

(b) That the question be now put, i.e., that the vote be taken without further discussion.

(c) That the discussion be postponed or adjourned till some definite date in the future.

(d) That the question be laid on the table, i.e., that it be "shelved" for the present.

(e) That the meeting adjourn. A motion to adjourn is always in order but may not be made while a member is speaking or while the vote is being taken. It can be debated.

## **BY-LAWS**

An Institute at an annual or special general meeting called for that purpose may make, alter or repeal by-laws or regulations for its general management not inconsistent with the provisions of the Act, or the Provincial by-laws; such by-laws or regulations shall, however, not have force or effect until approved by the Council.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **How to present resolutions:**

To the Constituency Conferences: Signed by the President and Secretary of 2 branches.

To the District Conferences: Signed by 2 branches, or by the Constituency Conference.

To the Provincial Convention: Signed by 2 branches, or, by Constituency Conference, or, by the District Conference, or, from the Provincial Executive through the Resolutions Committee, or, from the floor of the Convention through the Resolutions Committee.

# **Women's Institute Constituency Organization By-Laws**



## **NAME**

This organization shall be called the.....  
Women's Institute Constituency Organization.

## **POLICY**

1. An Annual Constituency Conference shall be held each year so that all the Institutes in the Constituency may have the privilege of becoming acquainted for the purpose of co-ordinating and advancing the work of the various Women's institute projects in the Constituency.

2. The Annual Conference shall be a rally meeting of all Women's Institute members in the Constituency.

3. Each Institute in the Constituency shall be officially represented by one delegate who has the privilege of casting one vote on all matters coming before the Conference.

4. The Women's Institute Constituency organization may be used to carry on any Women's Institute work thought advisable by the Conference, the Constituency Committee or the Constituency Chairman of Standing Committees hereafter provided for.

## **OFFICERS AND ELECTION OR OFFICERS**

1. A Constituency Convener shall be elected at the Annual Constituency Conference by majority vote.

2. There shall be a Constituency Committee made up of a representative from each Institute in the Constituency and the Constituency Convener.

3. A Constituency Convener shall choose a recording secretary. (It is recommended that this official be from the Convener's home Institute.)

4. Constituency Chairmen of the following Standing Committees shall be elected at the Annual Conference. These may be increased or decreased in harmony with the Provincial organization.

- (1) Agriculture and Canadian Industries.
- (2) Health and Education.
- (3) Citizenship.
- (4) Home Economics.
- (5) Handicrafts.
- (6) Social Services.

### **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

#### **1. Constituency Convener shall be:**

- (a) Chairman of Constituency Committee.
- (b) In charge of Constituency Conference.
- (c) Responsible for correspondence in regard to Constituency work.
- (d) Responsible for report of Institutes to District Conference.
- (e) Shall receive report from each Institute in Constituency.
- (f) Keep in touch with District Director.
- (g) Attend Provincial Convention.
- (h) Promote interest in the organization of new branches.
- (i) Assist Chairman of Standing Committees to establish their work.
- (j) Endeavour to visit Institutes in Constituency at least once during the year.
- (k) Shall collect and hold all monies.
- (l) Shall present a duly audited financial statement at each annual conference.
- (m) Shall turn over all monies, books, etc., to her successor within 10 days of her election.

#### **2. Secretary of Constituency Committee.**

- (a) The Secretary shall act as a Recording Secretary.
- (b) She shall see that the Conference is given necessary publicity.

### **3. Constituency Chairman of Standing Committee.**

- (a) Each Chairman should get in touch with the Provincial Convener of her Committee and obtain suggestions and the general policy for the year. These to be passed on to Branch Conveners.
- (b) Each Chairman shall receive reports from Branches of the work carried out and shall report same at the Constituency Conference and to her Provincial Convener.
- (c) She shall make a Constituency report at the District Conference.

### **CONSTITUENCY FINANCE**

The Constituency Convener shall at each Conference submit an estimate of expenditure for the ensuing year and shall be responsible for the collection of the constituency fund, as agreed to by the various Institutes. This fund should cover the expenses of the Constituency conference, such as advertising, hall rent, etc., postage and stationery; expenses of the Convener in paying one official visit to each branch Institute; expenses of the Convener in attending district, constituency and provincial conventions and in organizing new branches within her constituency.

Great care should be taken to keep the amount required from each Institute as low as possible so as to prevent undue burdens.

In some cases it may be well to link up with another constituency for a joint convener and conference. This can be done only with the approval of the Provincial Council.

The Constituency Fund should be placed in a bank in a trust account upon which the Constituency Convener may issue cheques.

The Constituency Convener shall prepare a full financial statement for the Constituency Conference and same shall be duly audited.

Upon the appointment of her successor the Constituency Convener shall forthwith turn

over minute books, cash books, monies and documents pertaining to her office so that these may be in the successor's hands within ten day after her election.

## **DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

A District Director is elected at the Provincial Convention. It is her duty to arrange for a district conference if so desired by the district. She shall have a general supervision of the work of her district and shall assist, as far as possible, the Constituency Conveners in her district in organizing new Institutes and shall endeavour to foster and stimulate the Women's Institute spirit.

She shall send out notices of her district Conference through her Constituency Conveners and shall plan the programme, in consultation with the Provincial President.

She shall preside at the meetings of the District Conference.

She shall have the custody of the Conference minute book, etc., between conferences, and shall turn over same to her successor within a reasonable time after her successor has been elected.

A district conference secretary is to be chosen for each conference by the Director.

It is her duty to take the minutes of the meeting in a book provided for the purpose and to forward the book and such other papers as she may have in connection with the office to the District Director within ten days after the conference.

A district fund may be raised to defray expenses in connection with the conference. This fund shall be held in trust by the Director who shall give a report of same at the Conference.

# Constitution and Bylaws of the Alberta Women's Institutes

•

## ARTICLE I.—NAME

The name of this organization shall be The Alberta Women's Institutes

## ARTICLE II.—MOTTO

The motto of the The Alberta Women's Institute shall be "For Home and Country."

## ARTICLE III.—POLICY

(a) The Alberta Women's Institutes shall be the central Provincial organization of all Institutes which have been or may hereafter be formed under the Women's Institute Act.

(b) The organization shall be non-partizan and non-sectarian, and no Institute shall be operated in the interest of any party, sect or society, but only for the general good and welfare.

(c) No society or organization for a special purpose shall bring its discussions or its subjects into any meeting of The Alberta Women's Institutes, except by the unanimous consent of the delegates present.

## ARTICLE IV.—OBJECTS

The objects of The Alberta Women's Institutes shall be the improvement of social conditions in rural and other communities by means of:

(a) The study of home economics (including home nursing, household science, sanitation, food values, sickroom cookery, house furnishing, sewing and other matters), child welfare, prevention of disease, local neighborhood needs, industrial and social conditions.

(b) The establishment of Institutes as social and educational community centres and the provisions for a welcome to new settlers in the community.

(c) The encouragement of agriculture and the improvement of agricultural conditions.

(d) The holding, establishment and maintenance of demonstrations, lectures, short schools, travelling and other libraries, exhibitions, competitions, meetings, conventions and attractions as may from time to time be declared useful for the promotion of the foregoing or any of them.

(e) To voice the sentiments of the Institutes on all matters of importance within the scope of Women's Institute work.

## ARTICLE V.—MEMBERSHIP

(a) An Institute which had a membership of at least eight when organized and has held at least four meetings during the preceding year, shall be considered a member of the Provincial organization.

(b) Failure of an Institute to pay annual dues for one year, as prescribed by the Provincial organization, shall constitute forfeiture of membership, except in special cases when satisfactory explanations are stated to the Council.

(c) A forfeited membership may be restored upon the payment of back dues to the Business Secretary-Treasurer.

(d) An Institute, wishing to disband, shall surrender to the office of the Council of The Alberta Women's Institute its Certificate of Incorporation together with a statement of the disposition of property or funds in their possession at the time of dissolution.

## ARTICLE VI.—OFFICERS

(a) The elective officers of The Alberta Women's Institutes shall be a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary and one Director from each district (who, by virtue of office, shall be a Vice-President of the Provincial organization.)

(b) These officers shall constitute the Council which shall have the general management and control of the affairs of The Alberta Women's Institutes.



(c) Two members, one of whom shall be the Provincial President, shall be chosen at the biennial election to serve as Directors on the Board of Directors of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada.

(d) The Provincial President, the Vice-President and the Recording Secretary shall constitute an Executive Committee, with power to transact routine business and to take such action as may be necessary on matters arising between annual sessions; they shall meet at the call of the President or Recording Secretary as circumstances require; shall have power to fill any vacancy on the Council or Conveners of Standing Committees for the unexpired term, and to appoint special committees when deemed necessary.

(e) The Council shall have power to engage such officers and servants as it may from time to time deem proper, to prescribe their duties, fix their salaries, and to dispense with the services of such officers or servants.

#### ARTICLE VII.—ELECTION

(a) All elections for officers of The Alberta Women's Institutes shall be by ballot for a term of two years.

(b) A majority of the votes cast shall be necessary to elect.

(c) No officer shall be eligible to the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

(d) Newly elected officers shall enter upon their respective duties at the adjournment of the Convention at which they were elected.

#### ARTICLE VIII.—AMENDMENTS

(a) This Constitution may be amended at any Provincial Convention by a two-thirds vote of voting delegates present, provided that the proposed amendments have been submitted in writing at the previous Provincial Convention or by the unanimous vote of all present.

(b) By-laws and standing rules may be adopted, amended or repealed at any Provincial Convention by a two-thirds vote.

## Bylaws

### ARTICLE I.—DUTIES OF OFFICERS

(a) The President of the Alberta Women's Institutes shall preside at all meetings of the Provincial organization and at the Council and Executive Committee meetings. She shall appoint all Conveners of Standing Committees and the Supervisor of Girls' Clubs, subject to the approval of the Council, and shall have general supervision of the work throughout the Province.

(b) In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President. She shall assist her in devising and executing plans of work.

(c) It shall be the duty of the District Director to attend meetings of the council, to have a general supervision of the work in her District, and to arrange for District Conference, after consulting with the Provincial President. She shall as far as possible assist the Constituency Conveners in her District in organizing new Institutes and endeavour to to foster and stimulate the Women's Institute spirit.

(d) The Recording Secretary shall:

1. Record the minutes of the Provincial Convention, the regular and special meeting of the Council and the proceedings of the Executive Committee.
2. Conduct all correspondence relative to the Programme for the Provincial Convention.
3. Have charge of compiling and printing of Annual Report.
4. Within three weeks after the election of her successor turn over to such successor all books and files of The Alberta Women's Institutes under her control.

(e) The Business Secretary-Treasurer, who shall be a salaried employee of the organization, shall:

1. Receive and hold all monies belonging to The Alberta Women's Institutes.

2. Keep an itemized statement of all receipts and disbursements.
3. Pay all accounts authorized by the Council and signed by the President.
4. Give an itemized account of all financial transactions at the Provincial Convention, or whenever required by two or more members of the council.
5. Furnish a bond from a regular bonding house, for an amount named by the Council.
6. Close her books in sufficient time for an official audit prior to the date set for the Provincial Convention.
7. Keep a correct list of all Provincial officers. Constituency Conveners, Conveners of Standing Committees, and all Institutes belonging to The Alberta Women's Institutes.
8. Conduct all business correspondence, and perform clerical work required by the Council, also cause to be printed and properly distributed all necessary stationery for the use of officers and conveners.
9. Within six weeks after the appointment of her successor, she shall deliver to such successor all monies, vouchers, books and property of The Alberta Women's Institutes under her control covering all transactions to the time at which she ceased to hold office.

(f) The Publicity Secretary shall receive monthly reports from all Institutes belonging to the Provincial organization, edit same and cause to be published any Institute news of general interest in various newspaper and magazines throughout the Province. Her term of office shall be optional with the Council.

(g) The Business Secretary-Treasurer and the Publicity Secretary shall attend meetings of the Council when requested to do so by the President.

(h) The duties of the Supervisor of

Women's Institute Girls' Clubs shall be as directed by the Council.

(i) Necessary expenses incurred by officers and conveners in the service of the organization may be refunded from the treasury by order of the Council.

## ARTICLE II.—STANDING COMMITTEES

(a) The Standing Committees of The Alberta Women's Institutes shall be: Health and Education, Citizenship, Agriculture and Canadian Industries, Home Economics, Handicrafts, and Social Services.

(b) The duties of the Conveners of Standing Committees shall be to outline the work to be undertaken for the year and to assist in carrying out such work; send copies of outline to the Provincial President for her approval, after which they will be sent to the District Directors and to Constituency Chairmen; to obtain reports from her Constituency Chairmen, summarize these, and make a report at the convention.

(c) The Council shall have power to increase or reduce the number of Standing Committees as seems necessary to the best interests of the organization.

## ARTICLE III.—DUES

(a) The yearly dues from each Institute to the Provincial Fund shall be one dollar (\$1.00) per capita. This shall be reckoned on the number of members who have paid their fees during the year just closing. The minimum fee shall be \$8.00.

(b) Dues shall be payable to the Business Secretary-Treasurer of The Alberta Women's Institutes on January 1st of each year.

## ARTICLE IV.—VOTING MEMBERSHIP

(a) The voting membership shall consist of the Provincial President, Vice-President, District Directors, Recording Secretary, Past Provincial Presidents, Constituency Conveners, Conveners of Standing Committees, Pub-

licity Secretary, Supervisor of Girls' Clubs and one official delegate from each Institute.

(b) Each officer and delegate at the Annual Convention shall have one vote. Voting by proxy, either verbal or written, shall not be admissable.

(c) Any member may attend the Provincial Convention and take part in the discussion, but the voting membership shall be as provided for in Section "a," Article IV.

## ARTICLE V.—RESOLUTIONS

(a) The Resolutions Committee shall consist of the Executive Committee, Provincial Convener of Citizenship and one other member, appointed by the President. Resolutions, so far as possible, should be sent to the Business Secretary-Treasurer at least one month before Provincial Conventions.

(b) All resolutions must be endorsed by the delegates of at least two Institutes, or a Constituency Conference, a District Conference, the Provincial Council, or the Provincial Executive Committee.

## ARTICLE VI.—PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

All meetings of The Alberta Women's Institutes shall be governed by Mrs. Parson's Rules of Order and the Handbook of The Alberta Women's Institutes.



